

# Museum of the American Railroad

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## **Railroad Museum Signs Construction Contracts, Sets Groundbreaking in Frisco**



**FRISCO, TX:** The Museum of the American Railroad will hold a groundbreaking at its new 12.34-acre site in Frisco, Texas, on May 31, 2011. The event kicks off the initial construction phase of a project that will relocate one of the nation's finest collections of 20<sup>th</sup> Century railroad artifacts and exhibits from Dallas' Fair Park.

The first phase of construction provides for extensive grading and site preparation, along with the installation of nearly one mile of trackage at the Museum's new site just south of Frisco Square.

"It is very exciting and gratifying to be at this point in the project," said Museum CEO Bob LaPrelle. "While our Capital Funding Campaign continues, we now have sufficient funds on hand to begin construction. This important benchmark enables the museum and its stakeholders to establish a true physical presence in Frisco and seek support for the next phase of work. We look forward to continuing and expanding the museum's nearly 50-year legacy of providing educational programs to North Texas."

Privately raised dollars from foundations and individuals, along with the City of Frisco's contributions to the project, have generated funds sufficient to complete the initial phase of construction. The scope of work will provide the Museum with adequate facilities to move its collection of historic trains to Frisco. Additional funding is sought to complete the remaining phases of construction, which ultimately includes a main museum building, period style-train shed, and restoration shop facilities.

Engineering for the project was completed and favorable bids awarded in 2010. Venus Construction Company of Mansfield, prime contractor for the first phase of work, will mobilize to begin grading and preparing roadbed for an extensive layout of track at the new site. Trac-Work, Incorporated of Ennis was awarded the contract for track construction. Burlington-Northern-Santa Fe (BNSF) Railway, has graciously agreed to provide the switch connecting the Museum to their main line at no cost.

Engineering was provided by Arlington-based Lunsford Associates, which also donated a portion of their services to the project. The layout of track at the site posed challenges due to the immense size of several Museum pieces, including "Big Boy," the world's largest steam locomotive. "It is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to participate in the design and construction phases of the Museum, a premier facility that will attract many generations of railroad enthusiasts from Texas, the U.S. and around the world," said Rick Lunsford of Lunsford Associates.

The new Frisco facility will allow the Museum to greatly increase its footprint and showcase its 40-piece assemblage of historic locomotives and rail cars, including the nation's premiere collection of Pullman first-class sleeping cars from the 1920s. "We're thrilled the Museum of the American Railroad is ready to break ground on its new home in Frisco," said Mayor Maher Maso. "It will be a tremendous, regional attraction complementing our growing collection of cultural, historical and entertainment venues in the area including the Frisco Discovery Center, the Frisco Heritage Museum and Pizza Hut Park, not to mention a sampling of outdoor public art displays. The synergy is exciting! It will generate tourism, enhance Frisco's reputation as an entertainment destination, and educate residents and visitors, alike, about the impact of the American Railroad on our nation's history, not to mention our own, considering Frisco's name is rooted in the St. Louis- San Francisco Railroad."

### **About the Museum of the American Railroad**

Founded in 1963, the Museum of the American Railroad is a not-for-profit Texas corporation dedicated to celebrating the heritage and exploring the future of railroads through historic preservation, research, and educational programming. The museum has collected artifacts and archival material from the railroad industry to exhibit and interpret their significance in American life and culture. Exhibits and general programs are provided year-round. Educational programs are available to local schools and universities through study trips, in-class programming & outreach, and online resources. For more information about the Museum's move to Frisco and current programs, visit [www.museumoftheamericanrailroad.org](http://www.museumoftheamericanrailroad.org)

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